

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of manufacturing a honeycomb structural body, comprising:

preparing a pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member;

applying a sealing material in an uncured paste state onto a circumferential surface of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member;

fitting onto the circumferential surface of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member a ring-shaped scraper having a ring-shaped center member configured to make a contact with the circumferential surface of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member such that the ring-shaped center member makes the contact with the circumferential surface of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member and applies a sufficient pressure on the circumferential surface of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member to scrape the sealing material and forms a sealing material layer on the circumferential surface of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member while sliding along the circumferential surface of a pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member;

moving said ring-shaped scraper in a length direction of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member from one end of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member such that the ring-shaped center member is separated from the circumferential surface of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member and the sealing material is spread over the circumferential surface of said pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member; and

moving said ring-shaped scraper in the length direction of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member from an opposite end of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member such that the moving of said ring-shaped scraper is reversed.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The manufacturing method according to claim 1, wherein the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member has a cross-sectional shape perpendicular to the length direction which is other than a round shape.

Claims 3-4 (canceled).

Claim 5 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the ring-shaped center member is made of a material that is softer than a material of said pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member.

Claims 6-7 (canceled).

Claim 8 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein a viscosity of said sealing material is in a range from 15 to 45 Pa·s.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein said sealing material comprises an inorganic filler and an inorganic binder, and said inorganic filler has an aspect ratio in a range from 1.01 to 10.00.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the ring-shaped scraper comprises a plurality of cramping members having a flat ring shape and configured to hold the ring-shaped center member between the cramping members.

Claim 11 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the ring-shaped center member has a thickness which applies the sufficient pressure on the circumferential surface of the pillar-shaped porous honeycomb member.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the ring-shaped center member comprises a synthetic rubber.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the ring-shaped center member comprises a synthetic rubber selected from the group consisting of a urethane rubber, a styrene-butadiene rubber, a butadiene rubber, an isoprene rubber, a chloroprene rubber and a silicone rubber.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the ring-shaped center member comprises an elastomer.

Claim 15 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the ring-shaped center member comprises an elastomer selected from the group consisting of polyisobutylene and polyethylene.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the ring-shaped center member comprises a urethane rubber.